

**Science Coordination Group
Meeting Summary – Meeting #1
The Westin Beach Resort in Key Largo
97000 Overseas Highway
Key Largo, Florida
January 15 – 16th, 2004**

Attendance:

Calvin Arnold, Director of Horticulture Laboratory in Fort Pierce, US Department of Agriculture
– Agricultural Research Service
John Benjamin, Acting Superintendent, Everglades National Park
Ronnie Best, Coordinator for the Greater Everglades Science Initiative, US Geological Survey
Joan Browder, Team Leader of South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Team, National
Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service
Gene Duncan (alternate for Terry Rice), Water Resource Director, Miccosukee Tribe of Florida
Ken Haddad, SCG Chair and Executive Director, Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission
Greg Knecht, CERP Liaison and Water Quality Standards Manager, Florida Department of
Environmental Protection
Cherise Maples, Environmental Manager, Seminole Tribe
Susan Markley, Chief of the Natural Resources Division, Miami-Dade County Department of
Environmental Resource Management
Loren Mason, Branch Chief, US Army Corps of Engineers
John Ogden – Chief Environmental Scientist in the Environmental Resource Division and
Program Director for RECOVER, South Florida Water Management District
Peter Ortnier, Director of Research for National Oceanographic and Atmospheric
Administration's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory
Rock Salt, Director of Everglades Policy, Department of the Interior
Jay Slack, Working Group Chair
Scott Tergen (alternate for Bill Reck), US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Members Not Present:

John Volin, Florida Atlantic University
Richard Harvey, Environmental Protection Agency
Barry Rosen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Advisors and Staff:

Greg May, Director, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
Bob Doren, Senior Science Advisor, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
Rafaela Monchek, Program Analyst, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

Charter Discussion:

The formation of the Science Coordination Group (SCG) represents a new paradigm and is not simply a more robust Science Coordination Team (SCT). Previous science coordinating bodies

have been under the Working Group. This group has been elevated to the same level as the Working Group and will report directly to the Task Force.

The SCG is responsible for the following Tasks:

- Drafting a plan for Task Force approval to coordinate science that will track and coordinate programmatic level science and research. Congress has asked for this plan by September 2004.
- Providing specific responses to priority work activities assigned by the Task Force. Because of the limited time available to develop the plan to coordinate science, the Task Force probably will not assign many additional work activities until the plan is completed.
- Assisting the Working Group in fulfilling its responsibilities to the Task Force.

The SCG membership includes scientists and managers to help ensure better communication and integration of science and management needs.

The Chair will provide a SCG update at each Task Force meeting to include apprising the Task Force of matters the SCG believes relevant.

The SCG has the same FACA provisions as the Task Force and the Working Group. SCG recommendations are provided to the Task Force.

If appropriate the SCG can organize itself into sub-groups in order to accomplish their goals.

The Chair of the Working Group is a non-voting member of the SCG and will help to ensure that the two groups are coordinated and not duplicating functions.

Meeting Format:

Public comment will occur in every SCG meeting. There will be a whip-around at the start of each meeting to provide members with the opportunity to give agency updates relevant to the group.

Congress has asked that the plan to coordinate science be completed by September 2004. Between now and September, Task Force meetings are scheduled for February, May and September. Stand alone Working Group meetings are scheduled for March and July.

End State:

The March 2003 GAO Report title provides the most important theme for the SCG: The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force Needs to Improve Science Coordination to Increase the Likelihood of Success. This must be the initial priority.

Ken identified the following additional needs/themes while reviewing the GAO report and documents from past science coordination bodies:

- Focus on gaps that will reduce the likelihood of restoration success
- Obtain clear direction from the Task Force
- Task Force must identify key questions or management issues for the science process

- Priorities must be established
- Science coordination for all three restoration goals needs improvement
- Recommendations of things to consider – passive vs. active management, reviewing overall restoration schemes from a science perspective and how it relates to adaptive management
- Ecosystem level indicators vs. local indicators relating to the health of the system
- Gap in monitoring external drivers
- Ecosystem-wide data synthesis (data-rich, information poor)
- Multi-disciplinary restoration-wide mechanism for science synthesis

Greg's Management Levels:

Restoration in south Florida is being managed at three levels. Agencies operate at level one. Agencies working in partnerships like the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) operate on level two. And the coordinating and reporting functions of the Task Force and SCG take place on level three.

Susan's Three Points:

1. Effort to filter out what data is strategically significant
2. Integrating data into something relevant to the issues
3. Communicating data so it is meaningful – more than just a list of numbers or a graph in some report

Jay's five tiered process:

1. What information is out there, how to find it, how to make sure it is available when and how to use it when making decisions? How do we make sure it is available when needed?
2. Agile process between decision makers, managers and scientists to determine what science is needed, adequate funding is available, and the appropriate timeframe is followed (Gant chart)
3. Filling gaps in the science with studies
4. Coordinated program for gathering background data that will be important in the long-term
5. Communicating data for use in making decisions

Other End State Visions:

- Nationally or internationally recognized model for coordinating science that works for both science and managers (Rock)
- Coordinated science so that the products are leading to restoration related management decisions. Information should be in a useful format, timely manner, malleable framework allowing new questions and issues to be addressed. (Ronnie)
- Agencies are in agreement on what needs to be collected and why. (Greg Knecht)
- Established differences between the role of this group and the role of individual agencies and RECOVER and the relationship between them. (John and Rock)
- Risk and uncertainty associated with the process is reduced. (Greg May)
- Focusing on filling in the gaps without getting bogged down in details. (Joan)
- System-wide baseline monitoring system. (Rock)
- SCG is to the entire restoration effort as RECOVER is to CERP or perhaps a companion team for RECOVER – covering everything else besides CERP. (John)

Group Goals:

- Develop a small set of strategic level three areas that are critical to restoration (60,000 foot view), then work down to the lower level issues (20,000 foot view) issues that must be identified and coordinated within the strategic areas.
- Devise a more elegant solution to coordinate science than simply identifying and listing every bit of science and research in every agency.
- Solicit broader input in developing this more elegant approach (ex. Gordon Orians)

End Statement:

Come up with a methodology to coordinate science at level three in concert with agency and partnership levels of management activities in such a way to reduce risk and uncertainty and to promote restoration and the probability of success.

The plan must complement other Task Force initiatives:

3 goals of the Strategic Plan:

1. Get the water right
2. Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species
3. Foster compatibility of the built and natural systems

Responsibilities/Functions of the Task Force:

Reports:

- 2004 – Strategic Plan, Biennial Report
- Plan to coordinate Science

Functions:

- Coordinate consistent policies, strategies, programs, projects and priorities
- Exchange information
- Facilitate conflict resolution
- Provide assistance and support to members

3 Specific priority tasks:

1. CERP implementation – CERP interim goals and targets; water quality as a policy issue for CERP implementation
2. CSOP, Modified Waters deliveries and Multi-species management
3. Consultation under the programmatic regulations, interim goals and recommendations, interim goals agreement guidance memoranda, initial CERP update, pre-CERP baseline, master implementation sequence plan, PIRs

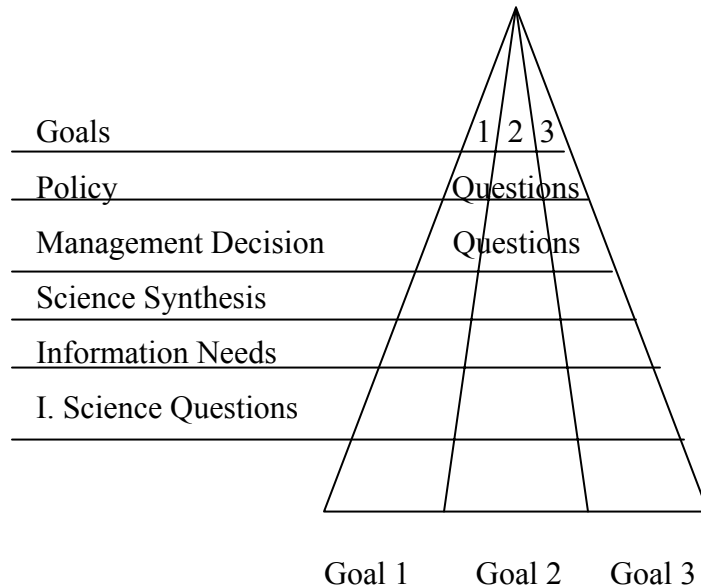
Generic options for describing the plan to coordinate science at level three:

Model 1: Laundry list of what science is needed to support each strategic plan goal and sub-goal

Model 2: Matrix - recognizing science spread across more than one goal

Model 3: Laundry /matrix combination

Ronnie's Model:



Model assumptions:

- Models assume we will input every data point at every level
- Survey done, identification, integration, and synthesis
- Determination of gaps to pass onto Congress and the Task Force
- Determine specific issues to relate back to the goals at level 3

Plan Goals:

- “Coordinating the coordinators” and determine what levels need coordinators
- Must focus on science
- Structured off of the goals and sub-goals
- Must be prioritized
- Specific are not important at level three unless they are make or break at the system level
- Duplication check without identifying every item
- Process for saying what science is relevant
- Translating science into measurable goals
- Levels of certainty and determining the big uncertainty
- Must first gather the information we already have (what is being worked on already)
- Identify strategic areas and within those areas identify the gaps
- Go to non-CERP components of models to find the gap and what CERP information is needed by this group
- Science driven process
- Process starting at Task Force level and isn't generated from agencies and partnerships
- Assurance that the science is credibly coordinated

7 Questions to be answered by report (John Ogden):

- 1) What science is relevant to restoration?
- 2) What kinds of science do we need to be doing?
- 3) What are the big science questions that need to be addressed and how?

- 4) Who does this?
- 5) What on the list is currently being done? And by whom?
- 6) How do we track ongoing science programs?
- 7) How do we set priorities?

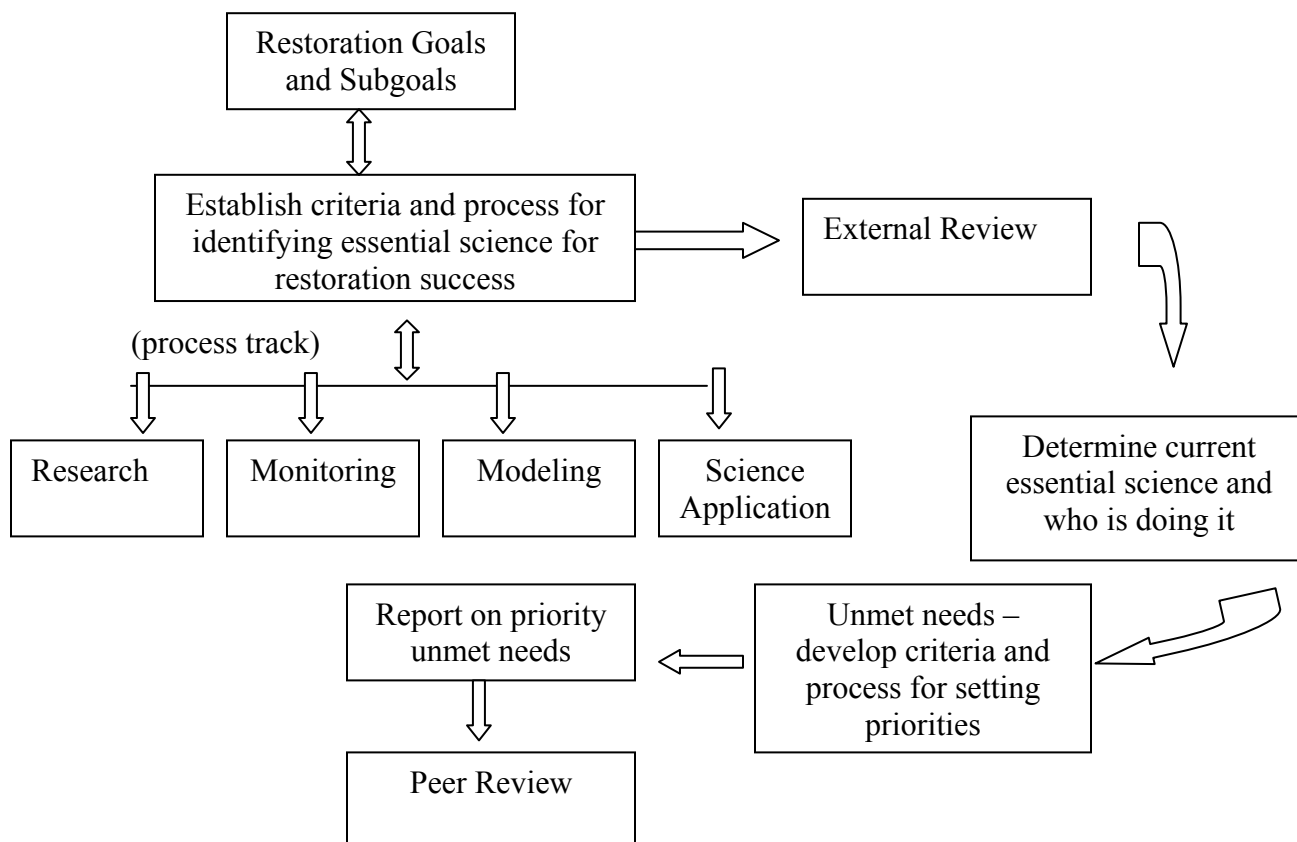
Suggestions for Plan outline:

- Modified Decision Tree Model (Loren) – similar to RECOVER; scientific approach to making decisions that can be adjusted to meet the group's needs
- Table of contents Model
- Review SCT Table of Contents

Plan characteristics:

- Stand up over time – must be able to add to it
- Credible
- Manageable
- Table of contents method will be used for creating the plan

John's Diagram of steps to coordinate science:



Comments on John's Model:

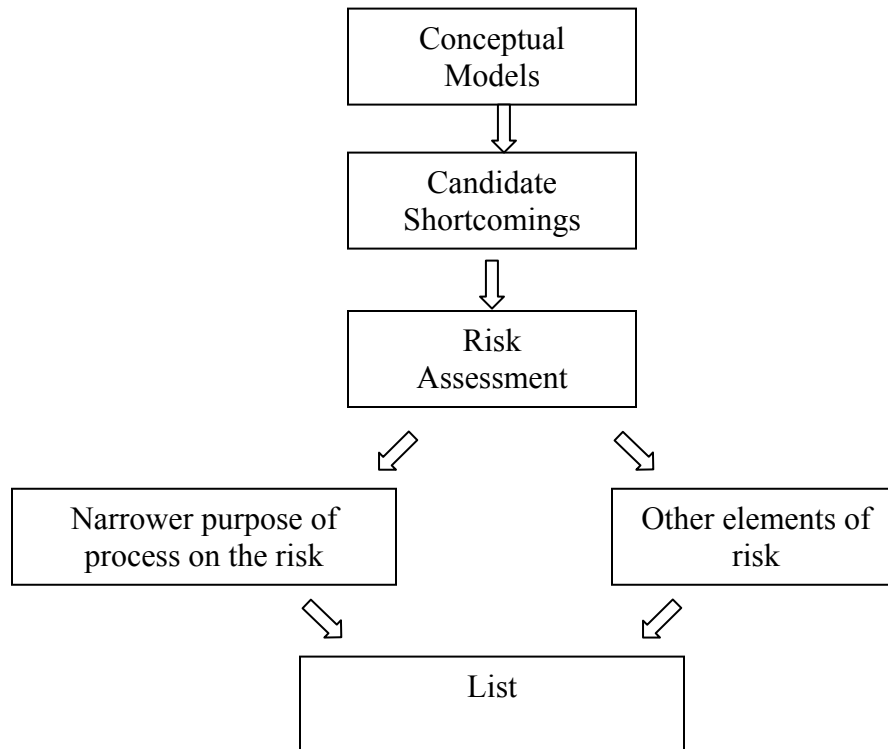
- Risk assessment is related to key uncertainties, must know what is already being done
- Unmet needs shown in the context of what is being done
- The four boxes are ways to categorize and organize thinking on science.

- More boxes may be added to process track

Rock's Model:

Model to get to the elegant few most important things, then work on the smaller issues.

Goals and Sub-goals:



Plan Table of Contents:

PURPOSE – Problem

SCOPE – Context (Articulate Goals and Sub-goals)

METHODOLOGY – level three coordination of science: process to identify strategically important science

A) Identify strategically important science Coordination

a. Link to strategic plan

b. Link to strategically important science activities (eg. research, monitoring, modeling, and application)

c. Link to conceptual science models

B) Gap identification (includes science, organization, process, etc.)

C) Develop risk assessment to success process

D) Identify high priority gaps

E) Miscellaneous

GAPS

OVERLAPS/DUPLICATION

NEXT STEPS

Potential Future Sub-groups and Discussions:

- Policy translation
- Determining existing information (integrating, synthesizing, determining risks at the third level)
- Fixing the water quality/phosphorous problem or CERP will kill the Everglades. (Gene)

SCG Calendar:*Future SCG Meetings:*

The next meeting will be February 10 – 11th in Key Largo, at the Westin. This meeting will include a presentation from a consultant on the Decision Tree Model. (Peter) The Task Force Office will write up the report and distribute to the team prior to the meeting.

The third meeting will be March 2nd in Orlando with a social the night of the 2nd. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the CERP meeting.

A fourth meeting will be held on March 30th – 31st in conjunction with the WG meeting in Key Largo.

Future Sub-group meetings:

Rock, Peter, John, Susan and Ronnie will meet on February 5-6th to discuss Section A at the NOAA – AOML building on Virginia Key. John will provide conceptual models to Rafaela prior to the meeting for distribution. An email will be sent to the team asking for any relevant information to aid this sub-group.

To meet the September 2004 deadline the first draft must be ready for the Task Force to review at their May 4 -5th meeting. The final draft must be completed by the September 16-17th meeting.

An outline of the report will be provided to the Task Force at their February 17-18th meeting. Sections A and C will be done first, followed by B and then D (see chart below).

Section:	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
A. Identifying Strategic Areas		X written up in April						
B. Identifying Gaps/Duplication			X					
C. Risk		X Written up in April						
D. Identifying High Priority in Gaps/Duplication				X				